

# Gold Is Struck in Manitoba and a Wild Scramble Begins

## Early Klondike And California Scenes Revived

Samples Brought to The Pas Show Highest Content on Record There, Running Up to \$100,000 a Ton

Special Correspondence of The Tribune

THE PAS, Manitoba, July 2. ALBERTA days of '49 and Klondike scenes of '94 are being revived in northern Manitoba. Gold again is luring thousands of adventurous souls into the Northland. They are rushing to the scene of the newest Eldorado—Elbow Lake, 150 miles north of The Pas and 650 miles north of Winnipeg—with the same show of determination and the same disregard for hardship and danger that marked the pilgrimages of the "Forty-niners" in prairie schooners and the dashes of the mushers by dog team and snowshoe over the frozen Alaskan wastes.

Another "gold strike" has been made, which, according to reports of prospectors who have staked their claims and returned to civilization for grub and supplies, bids fair to give the North American continent one of the greatest sources of the precious metal within its confines.

Two young Irishmen, Gordon and Kenneth Murray, comparatively new arrivals in the northern Manitoba mineral belt, are responsible for the spectacular free gold discovery that has attracted prospectors from all parts of the United States and Canada into the wilds "north of fifty-three." The Murphys entered the Elbow Lake district by trail before the spring thaw and started work as soon as the winter snows began to disappear from the muskeg.

In the latter part of May they made their find—an outcropping of gold-laden quartz right at the water's edge, where Grassy River flows into Elbow Lake. Then they started stripping the gold-bearing vein and tracing the trend of the ore. Finally they were satisfied that they had not found just a pocket, but had discovered a tremendous body of quartz, carrying high content of gold fairly evenly distributed throughout the rock.

Samples Show Highest Gold Content in Assayer's Record

Without a word of intimation to the few other prospectors in the district they staked their limit of claims and started by canoe and trail for The Pas, carrying samples of the ore. After they had recorded their stakings they sought an assayer for a test of the quartz they had brought in. No word emanated from the Dominion Land Office of the recording of the claims and the Murphys were tight lipped. But the assayer's report was too much even for the taciturn prospectors.

"Boys," he told them, "you've struck it. You've found the richest stuff I've ever seen here. Your samples show ore that bears from \$25,000 to \$100,000 a ton in gold content. If the ore body is any size at all you're both rich."

The Murray brothers couldn't keep the secret longer. They told a few friends in The Pas where to stake claims to be "in" on the big strike. Then the news spread like wildfire and within a few hours this little frontier town was in a flurry of excitement.

Before night had fallen a score of prospectors were on their way to Elbow Lake. On foot, by canoe and by gasoline "jigger" up the Hudson's Bay Railway the gold seekers started for the scene of the strike. There in no direct trail, either land or water, to the field. The prospectors must travel fully two hundred miles by roundabout routes to reach their goal, which means a trip of from four to six days.

Then on June 11 the story of the new gold find went over the wires to the outside world. Within two days this little town of 1,500 began to acquire a transient population that has swelled daily since. Now every arrival of the "Tamarack," the every-other-day train over the Canadian National Railway from Winnipeg and other points in Manitoba, means another hundred or two of gold seekers. They are not all men, either. Several women already have passed through The Pas on their way into the muskeg wastes of the Northland in quest of gold and ready for revival of the mining camp dance halls.

The earlier prospectors are starting to return to The Pas to record their claims in the Dominion Land Office. Hundreds of acres are being staked "to the region extending as far as Copper Lake, ten miles from Elbow Lake, where another stampede took place in the spring of 1919 as the result of a strike made by J. P. Gordon, a veteran prospector.

But the Murphys are not idle. They have gone back to their "bonanza" and are working like the beaver colony in the adjoining lake to ascertain just what lies beneath the huge overburden that covers the ore dyke.

They have stripped the overburden away from the ore for 350 feet from the point of discovery and to a width of fifty feet, but no walls have been encountered yet. Gold is deposited freely throughout in a mineralization of porphyry with quartz stringers. The body of the dike is in greenstone formation, with a continuous evidence of free gold. Many of the samples dug out so far are reported to be possessed of a 50 per cent gold volume.

The Murphys are not the only prospectors to find gold since the first discovery was made and the rush started. Already half a dozen other strikes have been reported, some far from the scene of the Murray claim. Even across the Grassy River, opposite the Murray find, the dike has been picked up again and

Scenes in the New Gold Country That Are Like Those of the Days of '49



Photo by BROWN BROS.

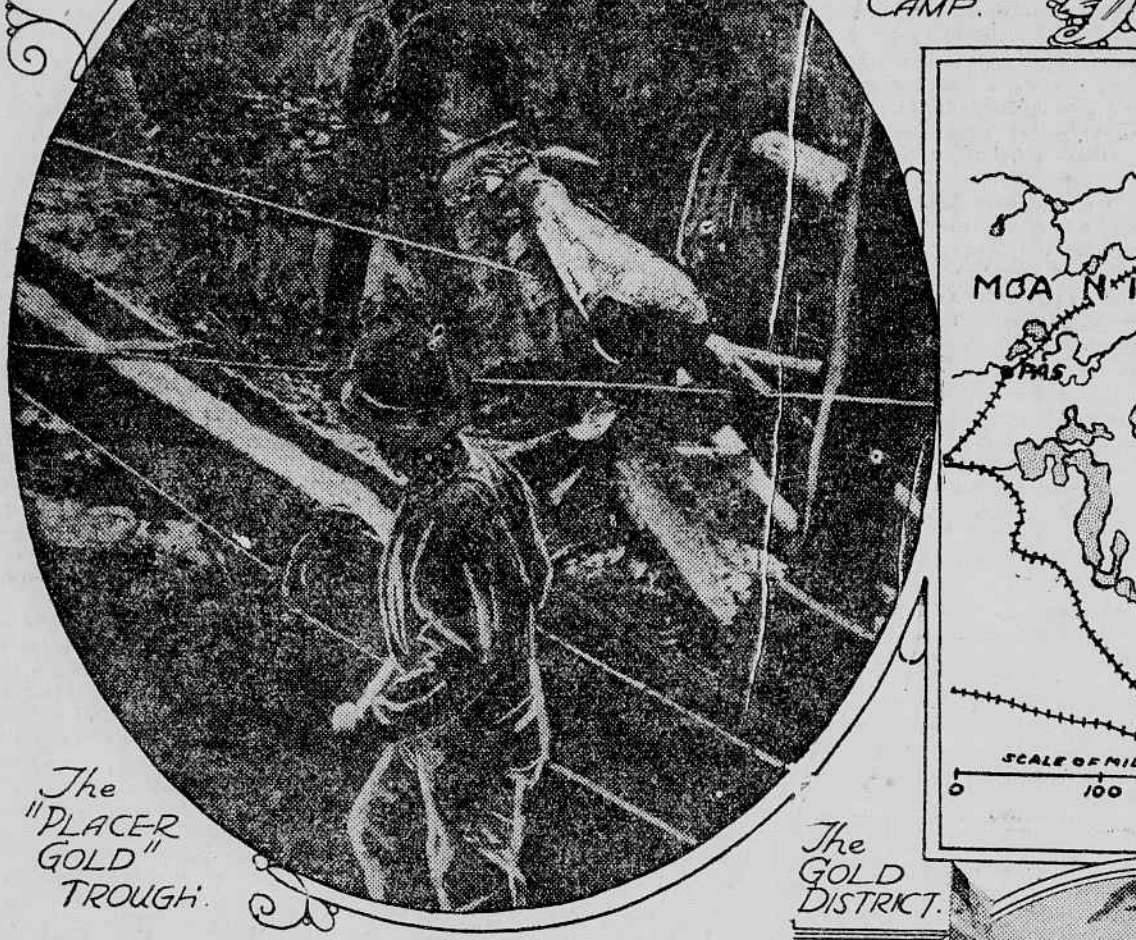


Photo by BROWN BROS.

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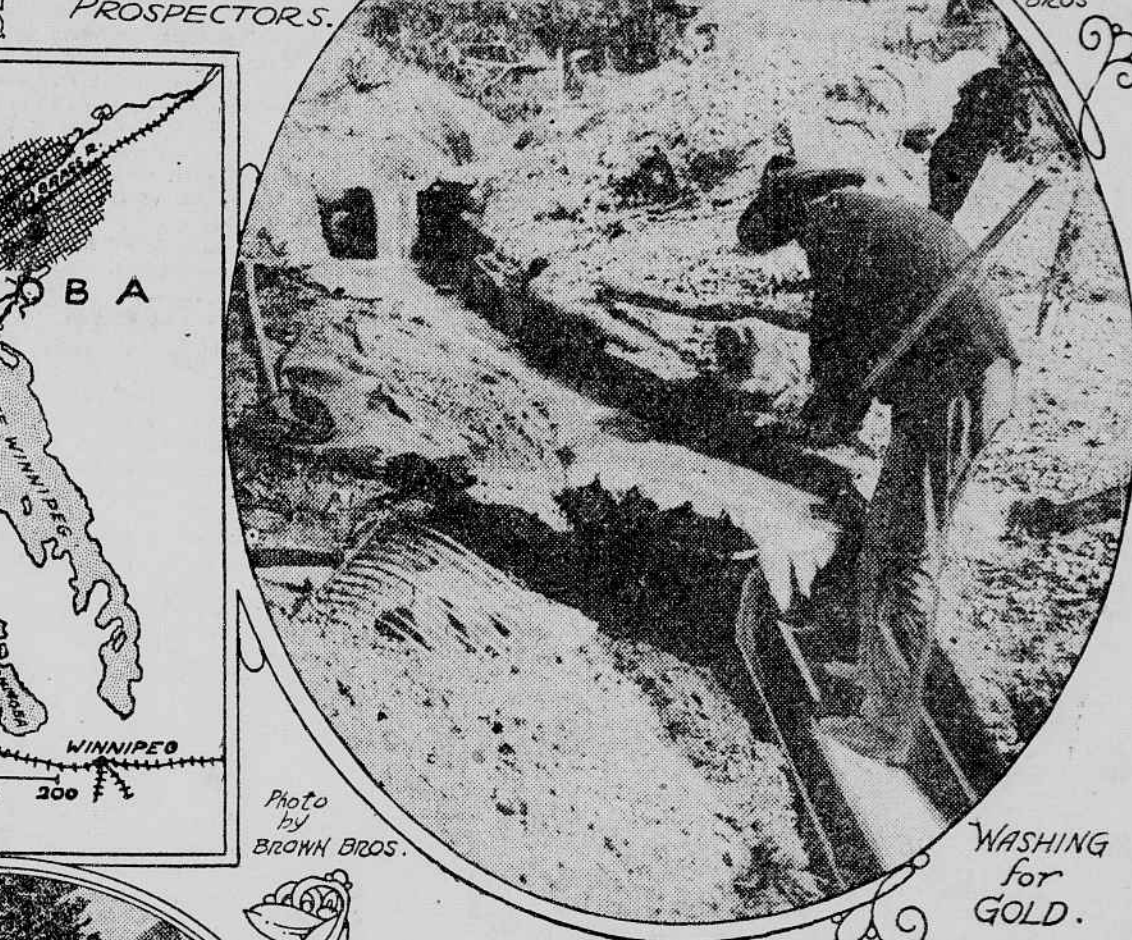


Photo by BROWN BROS.

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## Women Join in Rush to Fields "North of 53"

Irishmen's Find of Ore 650 Miles From Winnipeg Draws Prospectors From All Over Canada and U. S.

ment of the discovery have come the oldtime prospectors, who are hiesing to Elbow Lake from all parts of the Pas mineral district. But the scoundge are here too, the "tenderfeet" in the prospecting game, and they are pouring in as fast as the limited transportation facilities will handle them.

The Pas again will reap its gold rush harvest, for all of the prospecting parties stock up with provisions and supplies in the metropolis of the Northland. It is virtually the only gate-through which the new gold fields can be reached.

New Town Is Budding But Still Is Nameless

But even now a new town is budding at Elbow Lake. Nameless as yet, it will have a thousand inhabitants within a few weeks. Then some newcomer with a moment to spare from the feverish search for yellow metal will hang a fitting monicker on the settlement—probably "Elbow City" or "Murray"—and the name will stick.

The days of the other mining camps will be revived, for the same element of rough-and-ready men still follows the trail of gold as did in the days of '49 and '94. Red-blooded, two-fisted fellows with a love for thrills second only to their lust for golden wealth filched from the bosom of Mother Earth, they will find their way into the dance hall and the gambling joint.

Prohibition may have some small effect, but not enough to cause the new town to worry. It is "north of fifty-three," in fact, just south of the fifty-fifth parallel of latitude, and to a certain extent the saying, "there is no law north of fifty-three," still holds good. The bootlegger is destined to prosper and the dance hall girl is sure to have another fling at new made wealth, even before it has seen the mint and become coin.

Even in The Pas to-day there is that certain something undefinable which allows more so-called personal liberty than in towns and cities in more densely populated districts. The "law" is here, it is true, but it is not so inquisitive concerning "a little game of draw" or a "little pot of brew" out in the bush as its minions are in the towns and cities south of the fifty-third parallel. Real crime, though, does not have a chance in the Northland. Murder, thievery and other major offenses against law and order are few and far between. It is not the nature of the average prospector, trapper or lumberman in this part of the world to resort to crimes of violence. There are fights between men, of course, but they are "fit square and fair," as the natives say, and the best man wins—with his fists.

The new gold field is not easy of access, but that means little to the fortune seeker. There is no railroad within 100 miles, and the nearest river steamer landing is the same distance away. Even those transportation facilities are limited, for on the Hudson Bay railway a train leaves The Pas only once in two weeks—every other Wednesday morning at 9 o'clock—and its schedule from the starting time on is decidedly uncertain.

Nearest Steamship Landing 100 Miles From Elbow Lake

The steamer Nipawin, operating on the Saskatchewan River and one of two of its larger tributaries, goes from The Pas to Sturgeon Landing, 130 miles north, but that is still 100 miles from Elbow Lake. There are no trails which can be traveled by vehicles, so the horse and the driver are eliminated, except in the winter. Even then the dog team is the best mode of travel over the snowy trail.

So the prospector must rely on the canoe for the water portion of the trip and his sturdy legs for the portages between lakes and rivers. It is soul-trying trip, at the best. Carrying a canoe and a couple of hundred pounds of supplies and food over a rough trail for a score of miles is a man's task, but the lure of gold seems to lighten the load.

However, the prospector of the northern Manitoba field has one great advantage over the men who surged into California across the desert and into the Klondike over the frozen trails—his food supply, or at least a great part of it, is here for him. The lakes abound with many kinds of fish and game, ranging from the giant moose to the rabbit and squirrel, is plentiful. Again, "there is no law north of fifty-three" so far as game killing is concerned. Any animal may be shot or trapped at any time when it is needed for food.

So the grub pack needs to carry only flour for "bannocks"—the soggy bread of the prospector—together with salt, tea, sugar and bacon.

What the present gold rush will mean to this undeveloped north country seems now to be a matter for conjecture, but one thing is certain, that being the assurance that the great mineral belt will be prospected thoroughly and every resource worth while will be bared to the world. Nature has done much to barricade the wealth of the region, for the ground remains frozen eight or nine months of the year and only by dint of the hardest kind of work can the mineral store be tapped.

But the "gold rush" is on, and the belief of oldtimers, who have maintained steadily for a decade that "the stuff" was certain to be found in the Northland wastes beneath the muskeg and the snow, seems to be on the high road to vindication.

free gold in large quantities is in evidence.

The Pas Is Breeding Place For Genuine Prospectors

But the gold rush is not a new thing to The Pas. For a decade, since the little town acquired more than a mere handful of inhabitants other than Indians and half-breeds, it has been the mother of mining camps and one of the few breeding places left for the genuine prospector. This gateway to the great, almost uncharted northland that lies next to Hudson Bay really was born of a prospecting expedition.

It was in 1895 the first prospectors ventured into the wild bush country in quest of precious metals. At that time a claim was staked near Reed Lake, from which an assay of \$9 a ton gold ore was obtained. But the discovery in the Yukon country at that time drew prospectors into Alaska, and nothing more was done in northern Manitoba until 1906.

From that time until 1915 prospecting parties traversed the mineral belt at intervals but little intensified prospecting was done. Then the Beaver Lake discovery caused a ripple of excitement in the Northland and prospectors swarmed into The Pas on their way to the mineral belt. A little settlement, Beaver City, sprang up, but the district proved disappointing and the gold hunters gradually drifted away. To-day Beaver City is a little group of deserted shacks, and on the opposite side of the lake is Golden City, inhabited only by the "ghosts" of rush days.

In the summer of 1915 the Flin Flon copper mine was found. Four men who had hunted gold found rich copper deposits and staked the claim. They did their assessment work and held on to the property until a few months ago, when it was sold for a sum reported to be \$4,500,000, making each of the original prospectors a millionaire. It is estimated that the Flin Flon ore body contains \$200,000,000 in copper.

The average prospectors, however, seek first for gold, and most of them have eyes for nothing else. So it was that the drift of the quest for riches turned again in 1919 to the Elbow and Copper Lake areas in the vast mineral belt. Thomas Webb, who for six years had been seeking gold in first one district and then another, prospecting in the summer and trapping in the winter, finally settled in a shack at Elbow Lake. He had no companions, and it was rarely that any one visited the locality. It was believed that Webb was

"bushed" from his years of solitude in the wilderness, and mining men ridiculed the idea that he ever would find mineral worth while.

Then J. P. Gordon made a strike of a rich gold pocket at Copper Lake and the stampede was headed into the Elbow and Copper Lake district again. The Gordon pocket played out and the prospectors turned back to The Pas to

await another discovery report. Webb again was the sole occupant of the territory.

But with the first ice in the fall of 1919 Webb came into The Pas over the frozen trails, bringing samples of ore almost as rich as those which Gordon had taken from his Copper Lake pocket. Then another stampede took place into the very area where the present "bonanza" has been found. Prospectors went out by dog team and staked claims purely by location, as it was impossible to know what the ground contained beneath six feet of snow.

Stakers of Blind Claims Allow Holdings to Lapse

However, when the spring of 1919 came the ardor of most of the men who had staked the snow-covered claims cooled and they allowed the Elbow Lake holdings to lapse because they did not do their assessment work, as required by the Canadian government.

Webb went back to his Elbow Lake shack, however, and took a small hand ore-crushing plant with him. He returned to The Pas in the fall with a fair quantity of gold and took a trip to Vancouver and the Hawaiian Islands, apparently not as "bushed" as the

other prospectors had believed him to be. For when he returned to The Pas early this spring he brought with him a bride from Vancouver.

In the mean time the Murphys had settled in the Elbow Lake area and were engaged in trapping and prospecting. Gordon, the older, had been in the Copper Lake district, but moved to Elbow Lake when he had been fur trading in the God's Lake country, 150 miles to the north.

Soon after the winter snows disappeared they started their hunt for pay dirt. Right at the edge of the water they noticed a peculiar quartz outcropping and removed some of the overburden of earth.

After they had investigated enough to prove they had made a real strike they staked their limit in claims. Then it was that Webb returned with his bride, just in time to take up his old claims and to stake again beside the Murray discovery. So Webb, at last, will gain ample reward for his patience, although the Murray strike was made in ground which he had traversed many times and passed by to work in places he believed more promising.

First on the heels of the announce-

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